

# Materials for the Study of Extraterrestrial Presence in Human History Based on Ancient Primary Sources

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*"Method, you comprehend! Method! Arrange your facts. Arrange your ideas. And if some little fact will not fit in—do not reject it but consider it closely. Though its significance escapes you, be sure that it is significant."* Hercule Poirot in Agatha Christie's Murder on the Links (1923).

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## Footnotes

Ancient primary sources contain a suggestion that extraterrestrials or intelligent non-humans had some role in early human history. It is a suggestion which derives from circumstantial evidence. Based on currently available written sources, a proof is not possible. The nature of the primary sources themselves is responsible for this situation, since all written literary sources relevant to the topic describe the early days of humanity and are of a legendary or mythological nature. The relevant primary sources, moreover, are few in number. Nonetheless, within these few sources there are a handful of passages which stand out, seeming to suggest an extraterrestrial or non-human interaction, or at least a presence.

The question of ancient extraterrestrial interaction with humanity is a fascinating one and has been the partial focus of many books and articles. The topic received an early and excellent treatment in *Intelligent Life in the Universe* (1966) co-authored by the noted astronomers I. S. Shklovski and Carl Sagan. In Chapter 33 of that work, "Possible Consequences of Direct Contact," Sagan suggested some criteria for evaluating relevant material of a mythological nature:

"What guise may we expect such a contact myth to wear? A simple account of the apparition of a strange being who performs marvelous works and resides in the heavens is not quite adequate. ...Such an unusual occurrence [as extraterrestrial contact] would certainly be described in the legends and myths of the people who came into contact with space voyagers. The astronauts would probably be portrayed as having godlike characteristics and possessing supernatural powers. Special emphasis would be placed on their arrival from the sky, and their subsequent departure back into the sky. These beings may have taught the inhabitants of the Earth useful arts and basic sciences, which would also be reflected in their legends and myths" (1).

A quantitative and qualitative advance in scholarship on the subject was made by the polymath Jacques Vallee, who holds a master's degree in astrophysics from the University of Lille and a doctorate in computer science from Northwestern University. In *Passport to Magonia* (1969) Vallee provided data from historical sources dating from about the 5th century B.C. to the end of the 19th century, as well as earlier mythological material suggesting a continuous extraterrestrial presence on Earth. The subtitle of *Passport to Magonia*, "On UFOs, Folklore, and Parallel Worlds," reflects other areas explored by Vallee, and by his predecessors, and successors. Vallee and others from the 1960s onward have suggested that psychosocial causes may explain some of the sightings of extraterrestrial beings and UFOs. An additional view which has been advanced is that we are not dealing with extraterrestrials but "ultraterrestrials," entities resident on the earth with us, but which we are unable to catch more than glimpses of due to our limitations as humans, and/or the reluctance of these entities to interact with us. In any case, looked at from these different and fascinating perspectives, potential areas of investigation have expanded to include folklore, "Wonders" books produced in the Middle Ages, Lives of the Saints, and other similar material. Both the data and the method were refined in Vallee's recent *Wonders in the Sky* (New York, 2009), co-authored by Chris Aubeck. In that book, the authors revisited the data presented in *Passport to Magonia*, eliminating some material and refining and/or adding other material. Especially significant was the expanded attention Aubeck and Vallee devoted to a discussion of method, including rules of inclusion and exclusion of material, and the development of useful descriptive icons or labels for the categories and episodes in the display of their data (2).

Another important pioneer in the study of early human contact with extraterrestrials is the distinguished scholar Thomas E. Bullard, who holds a doctorate in folklore from Indiana University. In his excellent article "Anomalous Aerial Phenomena before 1800" he notes that from remote antiquity to about 1800, a supernatural worldview prevailed in which anything out of the ordinary could be attributed to supernatural forces. These included many now-familiar astronomical or meteorological phenomena such as comets, meteors, and parhelia (atmospheric halos). However, he also observed some accounts of phenomena of unusual character and less certain identity: wildfire, apparitional phenomena, aerial phenomena associated with the births and deaths of rulers, heroes, and great events, aerial phenomena associated with gods and saints, death-omen lights, supernatural beings including ghosts, witches, will-o'-the-wisps, the Wild Hunt, Fairies, aerial vehicles, and UFO-like phenomena (3).

[3]

Bullard notes that the priesthoods of the Greek and Roman world, like their Babylonian predecessors, were always interested in oracles and divination. The surviving texts of some of these oracles are replete with observations of various aerial phenomena. Unlike the priests, however, reliable Greek historians such as Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon did not concern themselves with prodigious events, and/or anomalous phenomena. This situation was reversed with later Roman historians such as Livy, Tacitus, Suetonius, Dio Cassius, and Ammianus Marcellinus, and non-Roman historians in the Roman world such as Plutarch, Flavius Josephus, and Diodorus Siculus whose works include unusual phenomena as a matter of course (4).

Bullard's important general categorization of the early material was enhanced by his illuminating description of the spirit-filled universe of early and medieval humanity:

"A common cosmology of the supernatural era envisioned a tripartite universe. An upper or heavenly level belonged to the gods or powerful high spirits; the middle level was the earth and belonged to humans; the lower level or underworld belonged to the dead or lesser, often malevolent spirits. These levels were never far apart and intersected at some points, such as a mountain or cave. A sacred tree might have its roots in the underworld and its upper branches in heaven. Some spirits shared the earth itself, inhabiting every tree, rock, or stream and interacting with human beings on occasion. Normally invisible or imperceptible beings such as fairies might cohabit the earth in a sort

of alternative universe but occasionally appear to mortals. Traffic to and fro between one level and another was also a common way for humans to meet supernatural beings. A vehicle was seldom required for these otherworldly visitors, but the supernatural world view allowed the gods to descend or the dead to arise and exercise influence on earth as a normal, even predictable state of affairs" (5).

Contact between humans and the otherworld took various forms including direct meeting, visions, apparitions, signs and wonders, "prodigies", and "divine providence" (6).

Bullard's general conclusion is that "pre-1800 anomalies do not make a case for long-term alien visitation, nor do they necessarily refute it" (7).

[4]

A classification system which is widely used in studies and discussions of extraterrestrial-human interaction in the *modern* period was proposed by the astrophysicist J. Allen Hynek in 1972. Hynek described three types of contact with extraterrestrials: close encounters of the first, second, and third kinds (CE1, CE2, CE3), the last being the most extensive. All three categories included an unidentified flying object or aerial phenomenon of some type (8).

Parallel to the scholarly works mentioned above, many popular works of a pseudo-scientific nature appeared especially from the mid 1960s on. In some cases, these works were spawned by the more serious works. Characteristic of this genre are the writings of Erich von Däniken, Immanuel Velikovsky, and Zechariah Sitchin. These works, which have a broader and often eclectic focus, usually devote *some* space to the topic of extraterrestrial interaction with early humanity. However, much of this material is written from the standpoint of advocacy and is characterized by an unwillingness or inability to distinguish between primary and secondary sources, the intermingled presentation of data, speculation, and conclusions, as well as the amalgamation of information on a variety of unexplained or unusual phenomena into an investigation that purports to examine a single topic. Often these works lack primary source references and cite other secondary sources for their evidence, and not infrequently the ultimate reference turns out to be a "crypto-reference," based on nothing at all. This lack of method and reliability fatally compromises these works for anyone interested in conducting an impartial examination of the topic of extraterrestrial involvement in ancient human history. Indeed, it was our dissatisfaction with the caliber of such popular secondary sources, as well as our familiarity with the primary sources, that prompted us to write the present essay. Other motivations included a desire to investigate some materials not considered by others, and the excitement of an adventure. Aubeck, Bullard, Sagan, Shklovski, and Vallee all called for professional historians, anthropologists, philologists, folklorists and others to give serious attention in their research to the question of extraterrestrial involvement with early humanity. Though this has not happened to any great extent, it is important to note that regarding the most ancient period, the treatment *already* provided by these scientists and scholars, though abbreviated, is of the highest order. They made use of the best translations of the primary sources then available and provided full references for the secondary source material. Their classifications, analyses, conclusions, and even their musings are important and constitute examples of innovative investigative research and scholarship at its best. We benefitted enormously from their works, and also from the important writings of author and encyclopedist Jerome Clark. The Western metaphor of "dwarfs, standing on the shoulders of giants" certainly applies to the present writer—in its "non-extraterrestrial" sense.

[5]

Even though our topic is a narrow one, because it has become linked to a welter of non-standard phenomena, it unfortunately has acquired the aura associated with them. It is for this reason that graduate students and non-tenured professors who are interested in academic employment in disciplines such as history and anthropology avoid the topic. Regrettably, the avoidance of the topic by academics denies us the fruit of their

expertise, and also denies such qualified specialists themselves the opportunity to reflect on matters of methodology. For it is in considering the most elusive topics seriously that historians and others may hone and develop their analytical skills. This fruit, though hard to reach, is especially delicious. The work involves conducting an *investigation*, not attempting proofs. The material needs to be treated with exactly the same rigor and respect accorded to more conventional topics. Because the topic itself is so unorthodox to the scholarly community, the methodology employed for studying it must be entirely orthodox—that is to say, it must comport with the rules of evidence found in traditional scholarly studies. Any conclusions presented must be based on a reasonable interpretation of the evidence examined in the study. Speculative implications, when advanced, should be clearly identified as such and expressed in the most cautious language. Concluding that nothing can be concluded is a valid conclusion, and one worthy of respect if the investigation is fairly and properly conducted.

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Before proceeding to a discussion of the relevant primary sources, a few general remarks about the sources are in order. On what bases are we including or excluding material? Let us start with the exclusions.

As we are dealing solely with written sources, we exclude archaeological material, interpretations of which can be highly subjective.

We have excluded sources of questionable provenance/authenticity and interpretation. The so-called Tulli papyrus is an example of the first type: it is an illegitimate "ancient" source, a 20th century hoax. The *Popol Vuh*, a tantalizing Mayan legend about visitors from the stars, has been excluded because of likely contamination by contact with Europeans. The story of Atlantis also has been excluded, in this case because of questionable interpretation. Though found in authentic sources (Plato's dialogues *Timaeus*, and *Critias*, ca. 360 B.C.) the texts themselves do not mention extraterrestrials of any kind, or even superhumans. Atlantis' cities were guarded by towers and gates, not unlike the cities of Greece. Ultimately, it actually was *defeated* in battle by the Athenians, assuming that this is history and not legend. Suggestions that Atlantis was a technologically advanced society with deadly weapons were advanced by 19-20th century psychics such as Helena Blavatsky, Ignatius Donnelly, and Edgar Cayce, and are not at all supported or even suggested by Plato's text. We have here a legitimate ancient reference adopted by a later era and imbued with a meaning not found in the original text—a not infrequently observed phenomenon.

[6]

Written primary sources which have been included in this study were selected because their narrations involve non-human, superior entities and contain unusual details. The presence of UFOs could not be a selection criterion here (as it is in more extensive works), since requiring a spaceship would entirely eliminate the earliest written material. Requiring a spaceship would also rule out much of the folkloric material, which may suggest cohabitation with us of non-human, superior entities (perhaps ultraterrestrials) rather than the arrival on Earth of extraterrestrials.

Among the sources included in this study are: Berossus' account of the Oannes entities, and Mesopotamian and Biblical narratives on the creation/destruction of humanity, including mention of interbreeding with the creator entities. For the sake of completeness, the airship supposedly described in the book of Ezekiel is briefly introduced and referenced. This material must be used with the greatest caution for several reasons. First, though some of these sources concern themselves with the "history" of early humanity, its creation and earliest period, they are not history in any verifiable sense. All the examples selected have an undeniably legendary and mythological cast. Second, the sources are relatively late with respect to the events they purport to describe. Berossus, who lived in the 4th century B.C., is describing a time long anterior to his own. Indeed, Berossus' own information about Oannes has survived most fully only in Eusebius' *Chronicle*, written

in the 4th century A.D. The Old Testament, in its current form, dates from about 400 B.C., even though individual books may have existed hundreds of years earlier in oral or written form. The lateness of the source relative to the event it describes always increases the possibility of extraneous accretions.

Following exhortations in the writings of Aubeck, Bullard, and Vallee, we will also investigate some folkloric material from Armenia, Iran, and India—but in a second essay. In the case of mythology and folklore, we are faced with a methodological problem which Sagan and others raised and which needs to be restated—even if we are unable to resolve it. This deals with additional criteria for the selection or rejection of such material. For example, it is the *nature* of a god to have extra-human powers. Thus, Zeus hurling a lightning bolt, or a giant flattening a house, need not be extraterrestrial figures using weapons of mass destruction. To paraphrase Sigmund Freud, sometimes a giant is just a giant. The peculiar nature of the subject and its sources requires a methodology which examines myths, legends, and folklore on an individual basis. The all-or-nothing approach—either complete incorporation of "the gods" as extraterrestrials, or their complete exclusion—will not do.

With these considerations in mind, let us proceed to an investigation of the primary sources.

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[7]

## The Oannes Creatures/Entities

The Oannes creatures were talking amphibians which are described as instructing humankind in all the essential arts of civilization over a period of time. The fullest account appears in the *Chronicle* of the Christian cleric Eusebius (ca. 263-ca. 339), which has recently become available in English translation (9). In his sections *How the Chaldeans chronicled [their past], from Alexander Polyhistor; about their writings and their first kingdom*, and *Abydenus on the first Chaldean kings*, Eusebius describes material found in Books One and Two of the 4th century B.C. writer Berosus. Eusebius' account itself derives from summaries of Berosus made by early authors such as Alexander Polyhistor (first half of the 1st century B.C.) and Abydenus (perhaps 200 B.C.), and not from Berosus' text itself, which may or may not have been extant when Eusebius was writing. In the passage below, Eusebius describes the appearance of the Oannes entities and their activities. We have italicized the crucial passages.

### The Chaldean Chronicle

#### **How the Chaldeans chronicled [their past], from Alexander Polyhistor; about their writings and their first kingdom.**

Here is what Berosus related in Book One, and in Book Two what he wrote about the kings, one by one. He mentions the period when Nabonassar was king, but merely records the kings' names not saying anything precise about their deeds, perhaps because he did not consider that they had done anything worth recalling—beyond [providing] a list of their names. This is how he begins.

Apollodorus says that Alorus was the first Chaldean king to rule in Babylon, reigning for 10 sars. A sar consists of 3,600 years, and this [figure may be] broken down into [units called] ners and soses. He says that one ner is 600 years, while one sos is 60 years. This is how the [Chaldean] ancients reckoned [periods of] years. Having stated this, he proceeds to enumerate the kings of the Assyrians, one by one. There were 10 kings from the first king, Alorus, to Xisuthrus. He says that during [the latter's] time the first great flood occurred, which Moses also mentions. He states that the reign of those kings consisted of a total of 120 sars, making a total [in our denomination] of 2043 myriad years. He describes them one by one thusly.

[8]

He says that on the death of Alorus, his son, Alaparus, [ruled for] 3 sars; after Alaparus, the Chaldean Almelon, from the city of Pautibiblon [? Bad-tibira], ruled for 13 sars; after Almelon, Ammenon, from the city of Pautibiblon, ruled for 12 sars. *Now in his day a creature called Idotion, having the [composite] shape of a man and a fish, emerged from the Red Sea [Persian Gulf].* After [Ammenon], Amegalarus, from the city of Pautibiblon, ruled for 18 sars, and after him, the shepherd Daonus, from the city of Pautibiblon, ruled for 10 sars. *In his day, once again there emerged from the Red Sea four hybrid beings of the same man-fish type [as Idotion].* Then Edovanchus, from the city of Pautibiblon, ruled for 18 sars. *During his reign once again another sort of man-fish being emerged from the Red Sea, called Odacon. He says that all of them were from Oannes, [and] he concisely describes them, one by one...*[king list]

This makes a total of 10 kings [ruling for] a total of 120 sars. And they say that 120 sars equal 2043 myriad years, assuming that a sar consists of 3,600 years.

Such are the figures related in Alexander Polyhistor's book. And if a person regards this as accurate history, and accepts as valid [reigns lasting] for such myriads of years, then [that person] would have to believe other incredible material found in the same book. Howbeit, I will relate what that same Berosus relates in the aforementioned historical romance, and will resume their previous [thread] which [Alexander] Polyhistor has put in his own book. One after the other he recounts these types of things.

### **More apocryphal Chaldean history [taken] from the same book of Alexander Polyhistor about the Chaldeans.**

In the first of [his] Babylonian books, Berosus claims that he lived in the time of Philip's [son] Alexander, and that he wrote based on numerous books which were kept carefully in Babylon [describing a period of] 215 myriad years, [such as] chronologies, historical accounts, the Creator's making of Heaven and Earth and the Seas, and [information] about kings and their deeds...

[9]

*Now it happened that in the first year, in the confines of Babylonia, there emerged from the Red Sea an awesome creature which was named Oannes. As Apollodorus relates in his book, [this being] had the complete body of a fish. Yet by the fish's head was another appropriate [human] head, and by the tail were [a pair of] human feet, and it could speak human language. A picture/likeness of [Oannes] has been preserved to this day. He further states that this creature kept company with humans during the day, completely abstaining from any kind of food, instructing people in letters and the techniques of different arts [including] city and temple [building], knowledge of laws, the nature of weights and measures, how to collect seeds and fruits; indeed, he taught humankind everything necessary for domestic life on earth. From that time on no one [individual] has discovered more. Now when the sun went down, the Oannes creature once again returned to the sea, remaining until morning in the vast expanse of the waters. Thus it lived the life of an amphibian. Subsequently other similar creatures came forth, as the book of the kings makes clear. Furthermore it is said that Oannes wrote about deeds and virtues, giving humankind words and wisdom (10).*

Eusebius' other passage concerning the Oannes entities is his summary of the account by the writer Abydenus:

## Abydenus on the first Chaldean kings.

So much for an account of Chaldean wisdom. Now it is said that Alorus was the first to rule over the land of the Chaldeans as king. He claimed that the most provident Lord had designated him as shepherd of [his] people, and he ruled for 10 sars. A sar is 3,600 years, a ner is 600 years, and a sos is 60 years. Alaparus ruled after him, followed by Almelon from the city of Pautibiblon. *During his reign the second Anidostus emerged from the sea. [He was a being] like Oannes, who had the appearance of a semi-divine hero.* [Almelon] was followed by Ammenon, then by Amegazarus. Next the shepherd was Daonus. *During his reign, four amphibious beings came on land, emerging from the sea: Iovdocos, E'newgamos, E'newboghos, and Amenentos. Anodap'os [, another sea-creature, appeared] during the reign of Edorescho who ruled after [Daonus].* Other [kings] ruled after him, until Xisuthrus. These are also recalled by Polyhistor (11).

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[10]

It is not possible to categorize this story according to J. Allen Hynek's three grades: Close Encounters of the First, Second, or Third kinds. To begin, there is no arrival by UFO. Oannes and his kind are not described as coming out of a spaceship, nor do they depart. On the contrary, these beings are described as resident on earth—at least in Eusebius' summary—and engaged in tutoring humankind for several generations. They are shown as raising humanity up and also telling it about its origins (see next section). They also provide information in written form, which the humans bury to preserve from the Deluge. This material is later retrieved and, presumably, helps humanity to reestablish itself.

Carl Sagan described the Oannes story as

"...a legend which more nearly fulfils some of our criteria for a genuine contact myth. ...Taken at face value, the legend suggests that contact occurred between human beings and a non-human civilization of immense powers on the shores of the Persian Gulf, perhaps near the site of the ancient Sumerian city of Eridu, and in the fourth millennium B.C. or earlier (12). ...Sumerian civilization is depicted by the descendants of the Sumerians themselves to be of non-human origin. A succession of strange creatures appears over the course of several generations. Their only apparent purpose is to instruct mankind. Each knows of the mission and accomplishments of his predecessors" (13).

Oannes is described as a creature/animal (Armenian *gazan*) but—like a robot—does not eat, at least when on land. It is tantalising to speculate that if this story reflects reality, entities of the Oannes type may have been teaching land mammals during the day and sea mammals during the night (14).

Beings in some way similar to Oannes are known from neighboring areas. The Phoenicians of the western Levant worshipped a god, Dagon, which was half-man and half-fish (15). The first ruler of the city of Athens, Cecrops, was described as half-man and half-fish (16). Of course, these stories from lands not so distant from Mesopotamia may derive from the Mesopotamian account of Oannes. Farther east in Iran, India, and China, we encounter similar myths of founding culture-figures who likewise are described as part-human and part-fish (17). If these unusual stories reflect reality, then the implication is that at some point early in human history, creatures/entities of the Oannes type were active in different parts of the Aegean, Mesopotamia, West and East Asia, and played a crucial role in the development of human civilization.

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[11]

# Mesopotamian and Biblical Narratives about Human Origins, Exterminations, and the Intermarriage of Humans with Their Creators

Accounts of the creation and early days of humanity appear in two related traditions, Mesopotamian (Sumerian/Babylonian/Assyrian) and Biblical. Though some of the stories in Genesis may derive from the earlier Mesopotamian legends, for convenience we will discuss them separately.

The Babylonian account of creation is given by one of the Oannes entities in a lecture to its human students. The passage below is from Eusebius' *Chronicle*:

There was a time, he says, when all was dark and water. And there were other sorts of creatures [on the earth]. Half of them could reproduce themselves [asexually], while there were others which procreated and bore humans with two wings, others with four wings and two faces, with one body and two heads, male and female, and [others] having both male and female natures [combined]. Other humans had the legs of goats, horns on their heads, others had horses' hooves. Others had the rear half of a horse and the front half of a human. Some had the hybrid appearance of a horse and a bull. Also born were bulls with human heads, dogs with quadripartite bodies having the flippers of a fish and a fish's tail sprouting from the hindquarters. [There were] horses with dogs' heads as well as humans and other creatures with horses' heads and/or human forms and the extremities of fish. In addition there were diverse sorts of dragon-shaped creatures, hybrid fish, reptiles, snakes, and many types of astonishing creatures of differing appearance. The pictures of each of them are preserved at the temple of Belus. All of them were ruled over by a woman named Markaye' who was called T'aghatt'ay in Chaldean. The Greek translation of T'aladday is "sea". Now while all of these mixed [creatures] were arising, Belus attacked. He cut the woman [*i.e.*, the sea] in two, making half the sky and the other half the earth, and he killed the creatures in it. Thus [information] about the natural world is expressed in the form of an allegorical fable which means that initially there existed only water and moisture and the creatures in it. Then that deity cut off its head and another deity took the blood which dripped from it, mixed it with soil, and created humankind. Thus they became wise and partook of the thoughts of the gods.

As regards Belus, which translates into Greek as Dios and into Armenian as Aramazd, he split the darkness in two, separating heaven and earth from each other, and then smoothed and fashioned the world. [Those] creatures which could not endure the strength of the light perished. Then Belus looked at the world, [both] the desert [parts] and the fruitful [parts], and gave an order to one of the gods to take [some of] the blood which was dripping down from his own severed head and to mix it with soil and to create humans, other animals, and beasts which could withstand this air. Belus also established the sun, the moon, and the five wandering stars. According to [Alexander] Polyhistor, this is what Berosus relates in his first volume. In the second volume he provides [information] about the reigns of the ten kings individually, which we have already treated. [This portion, from Oannes to Belus,] extends [the account back] more than 40 myriads (18).

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[12]

According to the account above, prior to the creation of humans in their present form, and apparently before the creation of dry land, other beings existed. These were hybrid or composite entities having parts similar to



a variety of mammals (including humans), birds, reptiles, and fish. This group was destroyed by a deity named Belus, who then created the Earth. Next, humanity was created from an admixture of soil and divine blood. A second destruction of life—"creatures which could not endure the strength of the light"—seems to be indicated after Earth's creation, followed by another creation of humans and animals "which could withstand this air." Thus, according to Oannes' account, humans were a deliberate creation of at least one god. The first creation was destroyed as the god(s) fashioned animals better suited to the Earth, which also was their creation.

Sumerian mythology, which in many ways parented Babylonian mythology, describes a subsequent attempt to destroy humanity (the Flood), a theme shared with the Biblical account in Genesis, which probably depends on it (19). According to the Sumerian epic *Gilgamesh*, one god was displeased with humanity for "making too much noise" (20) and resolved to exterminate the entire species. One dissident deity, Ea/Enki, informed the "Sumerian Noah" about the impending disaster, and it is through his efforts that a group of people of various professions board an ark taking along "the seed of all life" and survive (21).

Intermarriage between gods and humans is suggested in a later episode taking place generations later. In that period the epic's hero, Gilgamesh, is described as partly divine, which probably accounts for his great size and strength (22). Two non-human entities who guard a strategic resource are able to recognize this semi-divine quality in the hero, and it is this quality which gives him access (23).

The Sumero-Babylonian myths summarized above describe humanity as a creation of gods. The creators became disenchanted with their creation and would have destroyed it but for the interference of a dissident god. These tales also suggest interbreeding of some of the gods with human beings. It is interesting that the purpose given in these myths for the creation of humankind, apparently, is to have servants "to do our work" (24), though the nature of that work is not stated (25).

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[13]

The Biblical narrative, contained in Genesis 1-4, describes humanity as the creation of one or more gods. Yahweh, who later became the sole god of Judaism, was not alone at the creation of humankind or subsequently, since in Gen. 1.26 he is speaking to one or more entities when he says: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness..." He addresses this same group just prior to expelling Adam and Eve from the Garden: "Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 4.22). The presence of Yahweh's divine colleagues who surround him in a heavenly court is suggested in several other passages (Gen. 11.7; 1 Kg. 22.19; Job 1.6; Is. 6.8; Ps. 29.1). Although subsequently declassified as angels, members of this group (the "Heavenly Host") initially seem to have been Yahweh's equals.

The Biblical accounts of the creation of Adam and Eve and their subsequent nurturing have elements of an experiment. "...then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being" (Gen. 2.7). Adam, who is alone, is placed in a comfortable environment, Eden, which is stocked with vegetation, where his purpose—to the extent that humans *have* a purpose—is "to till it and keep it" (Gen. 2.15). There follows creation of "every beast of the field and every bird of the air" (Gen. 2.19) as company for Adam. Apparently, it was the expectation of the Yahweh-type entities that Adam would find in one of these animals "a helper fit for him" (Gen. 2.18). The animals are brought to Adam for naming, "but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him" (Gen. 2.20).

The procedure for the creation of Eve differed from that used for the creation of Adam, the other animals, or even vegetation, all of which were made "out of the ground" (Gen. 2.4-9; 2.19). For Eve, "the Lord God

caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman..." (Gen. 2.21-22).

[14]

The Biblical narrative contains an interfering dissident entity: Satan (Lucifer), or the Serpent. Though subsequently described as a rebel angel and even a creation, this entity's formidable powers suggest that it, like the beings of the "Heavenly Host," was initially Yahweh's equal.

Yahweh had told Adam and Eve that they would die if they ate the fruit from a certain tree.

But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like god, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3.4-5).

The reason for the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden was unrelated to their disobedience to Yahweh, since in Gen. 3.21 Yahweh himself is described as making clothing for his creations, who are suddenly embarrassed by their nakedness. Rather, the expulsion took place as a prophylactic measure. Yahweh was concerned that Adam and Eve might eat another fruit that was forbidden to them, from the tree of life:

Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"—therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life (Gen. 3.22-24).

Eventually, Yahweh rued the day he created humanity, and decided to destroy it:

And the Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. So the Lord said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the ground, man and beast and creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them" (Gen. 6.5-7).

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Noah, like his Sumerian counterpart, boards an ark with various animals, survives the Flood, and repopulates the earth.

The Biblical narrative mentions a species which was part god and part human. This was the group known as Nephilim.

When men began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were fair; and they took to wife such of them as they chose...The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men that were of old, the men of renown (Gen. 6.1-4) (26).

\*

There are important similarities in the Mesopotamian and Biblical accounts of the creation of humanity. According to these two related traditions, humankind was created by non-human entities possessing great powers. The initial creation was inadequate for some reasons, and so additional attempts were made. The "final product" after a period in a controlled environment, was released into the world, to shift for itself. Both traditions suggest that humans looked like their creators. The creator entities, after a period of time, became

displeased with their "experiment" and attempted to destroy humanity with a Flood, and by other means. This was barely prevented by a dissident god, faction, or entities with powers comparable to those of the creator entities, or by the selective benevolence of one god, because of the goodness of one man.

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[16]

## The Airship in the Book of Ezekiel

In preceding sections of this essay the primary sources describe the possible *creation* of humanity, and its *civilization* (or domestication) by non-human intelligent entities. In this section a primary source describes the possible *presence* of non-human intelligent entities.

Passages from the Book of Ezekiel are often cited as evidence of flying saucers and extraterrestrial presence in antiquity. The topic has been explored in some depth by others, in print and on the Internet. Here we shall present the relevant passages for documentation purposes, with little comment.

As mentioned earlier, the extant text of the Book of Ezekiel dates from around 400 B.C. Thus it is describing an event occurring more than one hundred and fifty years earlier. Ezekiel was an historical figure, a spiritual leader who ministered to the Jews of parts of Mesopotamia during the Babylonian Captivity. This ministry, which extended from about 593 to 563 B.C., is also the thirty-year period during which the incident described below occurred. It seems likely that Ezekiel himself authored much of the book, despite later editing.

The material from Ezekiel has been interpreted to describe: an airship; its crew (organic, robotic, and/or mixed); Ezekiel's contact with them; his abduction by them and transportation to another locality in Mesopotamia, an experience which left him stunned for seven days.

### The Airship (1.4)

As I looked, behold, a stormy wind came out of the north, and a great cloud, with brightness round about it, and fire flashing forth continually, and in the midst of the fire, as it were gleaming bronze.

### The Crew (1.5-14)

And from the midst of it came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the form of men, but each had four faces, and each of them had four wings. Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like the sole of a calf's foot; and they sparkled like burnished bronze. Under their wings on their four sides they had human hands. And the four had their faces and their wings thus: their wings touched one another; they went every one straight forward, without turning as they went. As for the likeness of their faces, each had the face of a man in front; the four had the face of a lion on the right side, the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and the four had the face of an eagle at the back. Such were their faces. And their wings were spread out above; each creature had two wings, each of which touched the wing of another, while two covered their bodies. And each went straight forward; wherever the spirit would go, they went, without turning as they went. In the midst of the living creatures there was something that looked like burning coals of fire, like torches moving to and fro among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning. And the living creatures darted to and fro, like a flash of lightning.

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## **Crew and Ship(s) (1.15-24)**

Now as I looked at the living creatures, I saw a wheel upon the earth beside the living creatures, one for each of the four of them. As for the appearance of the wheels and their construction: their appearance was like the gleaming of a chrysolite; and the four had the same likeness, their construction being as it were a wheel within a wheel. When they went, they went in any of their four directions without turning as they went. The four wheels had rims and they had spokes; and their rims were full of eyes round about. And when the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures rose from the earth, the wheels rose. Wherever the spirit would go, they went, and the wheels rose along with them; for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels. When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those rose from the earth, the wheels rose along with them; for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.

Over the heads of the living creatures there was the likeness of a firmament, shining like a crystal, spread out above their heads. And under the firmament their wings were stretched out straight, one toward another; and each creature had two wings covering its body. And when they went, I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of many waters, like the thunder of the Almighty, a sound of tumult like the sound of a host; when they stood still, they let down their wings.

## **Controller Entity (1.25-28)**

And there came a voice from above the firmament over their heads; when they stood still, they let down their wings.

And above the firmament over their heads there was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like sapphire; and seated above the likeness of a throne was a likeness as it were of a human form. And upward from what had the appearance of his loins I saw as it were gleaming bronze, like the appearance of fire enclosed round about; and downward from what had the appearance of his loins I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and there was brightness round about him.

Like the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about.

Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard the voice of one speaking.

## **Abduction and Disorientation (3.12-15)**

Then the Spirit lifted me up, and as the glory of the Lord arose from its place, I heard behind me the sound of a great earthquake; it was the sound of the wings of the living creatures as they touched one another, and the sound of the wheels beside them, that sounded like a great earthquake. The Spirit lifted me up and took me away, and I went in bitterness in the heat of my spirit, the hand of the Lord being strong upon me; and I came to the exiles at Telabib, who dwelt by the river Chebar. And I sat there overwhelmed among them seven days.

## Conclusions

Whether the sources examined in this essay are considered "historical" or mythological, the story they tell is the same: humanity was created by intelligent non-human entities. The Mesopotamian account of creation was told to a human audience by a talking amphibian, one of the Oannes creatures described in Eusebius' summary of earlier historians. According to this account, humankind was the product of deliberate creation. Earlier experiments had failed, and their products—hybrid and composite beings—died and/or were destroyed. The gods were dissatisfied with the resulting humans as well and tried to destroy them, though a dissident deity managed to prevent total annihilation. Cases of non-humans intermarrying with humans appear in the Mesopotamian myths. Created by gods to "do our work," and then almost exterminated for "making too much noise," humanity was not well regarded by its makers. However, this account itself was narrated by a very caring being, one of a series of amphibians which at some point emerged from the sea and instructed humans over many generations.

The Biblical account of creation in Genesis also shows humanity as a result of extraterrestrial experiment. These extraterrestrials were not especially impressed with their creations, and they did not want them to learn too much, become too aware, or live too long. A dissident god tried to interfere, in this case to educate the humans. Yahweh eventually destroyed his creation, sparing only one family. The Bible, like the Mesopotamian sources, also describes cases of non-human intermarriage with humans.

Earlier we quoted a conclusion made by Dr. Thomas Bullard, that "pre-1800 anomalies do not make the case for long-term alien visitation, nor do they necessarily refute it" (27). In the case of the *earliest* period which is the subject of the present essay, the situation is somewhat different. Here, *all* the relevant earliest written sources ascribe the creation and development of humanity to intelligent non-humans with immense powers. These entities are described as preexistent and the creators of the planet itself with all its life forms. At some time after the creation, other intelligent non-humans—amphibians—are described as educating humanity. The various creators and/or educators do not arrive in spaceships and do not depart, either. The implication is that they were present before the creation of Earth, and were still present when the sources were composed.

## Footnotes

1. I. S. Shklovski and Carl Sagan, *Intelligent Life in the Universe* (Boca Raton, Florida, 1998), pp. 453-454. An important predecessor to the authors mentioned in this essay was Charles Fort (1874-1932). Fort's *Complete Works* are available online at [sacred-texts.com](http://sacred-texts.com), and are well worth investigating: [Complete Works](#)

[of Charles Fort](#). Three works by Fort (New Lands (1923), Lo! (1931), and Wild Talents (1933) are available at Internet Archive in a single pdf download here: [Three Books by Charles Fort](#).

2. Two extracts dealing with remote and classical antiquity from Vallee's and Aubeck's important book *Wonders in the Sky: Unexplained Aerial Objects from Antiquity to Modern Times* (New York, 2010) appear as attachments to the pdf version of the present article. This material is not in the public domain and is presented solely for non-commercial educational/research purposes. Both extracts deal with the earliest periods only. The first is a selection of what we consider the most convincing myths Vallee and Aubeck collected which suggest extraterrestrial contact. The second extract is a selection of the most convincing historical events from their extensive *Chronicle* section.

3. Thomas E. Bullard, "Anomalous Aerial Phenomena before 1800" in Jerome Clark's *UFO Encyclopedia* (1992), p. 55-62. The full entry is attached to the pdf version of this article.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 52-53. For another excellent study of early aerial phenomena and possible UFOs, see the writings of the late Richard Stothers, an influential scientist at the Goddard Center at NASA. His article "Unidentified Flying Objects in Classical Antiquity," from *The Classical Journal*, vol. 103.1, 2007 pp. 79-92 with important bibliography is available at Internet Archive here: [Unidentified Flying Objects in Classical Antiquity](#).

Additional excellent bibliographies have been prepared by Archives for UFO Research/Archives for the Unexplained, in Sweden. Their material on antiquity is an attachment to the pdf version of the present article. AFU-UFO Bibliography on Ancient Cultures, Archeology and Ancient Myths.

Additional reliable and thought-provoking material was available at Dimitris Hatzopoulos' *Best UFO Resources* website. An HTML extract appears as an attachment to the pdf version of the present article. There is an interesting article at Wikipedia on [Ancient Astronauts](#), which includes much material we excluded from this essay.

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5. Bullard, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

6. Bullard, *ibid.*, pp. 50-51.

7. Bullard, *ibid.*, p. 67.

8. J. Allen Hynek, *The Ufo Experience: a Scientific Inquiry* (London, 1972; reprinted many times), Part II, chapters 8-10. Hynek's study is available at Internet Archive (for borrowing): [The Ufo Experience: a Scientific Inquiry](#).

9. Eusebius' *Chronicle*, translated from Classical Armenian by Robert Bedrosian (2008) is available at Internet Archive for reading online and/or downloading in pdf format: [Eusebius' Chronicle](#).

10. Eusebius' *Chronicle*, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-4.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

12. I. S. Shklovski and Carl Sagan, *op. cit.*, pp. 455-456.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 459. Sagan's remark that "Each knows of the mission and accomplishments of his predecessors" is based on a fragment of the Greek original of Eusebius, preserved in a much later work of George the Syncellus (died after 813). That fragment adds "All these [Oannes creatures], says Apollodorus, related

particularly and circumstantially whatever Oannes had informed them of: of these Abydenus has made no mention," I. P. Cory, *Fragments ...* (1832 edition), p. 31. An English translation of the fragments is available online at [sacred-texts.com](http://sacred-texts.com) [Cory's Fragments](#). The quotation referenced above is [here](#). An expanded version (*Cory's Ancient Fragments of the Phoenician, Carthaginian, Babylonian, Egyptian and other authors*) appeared in London, 1876, by E. Richmond Hodges. The quotation is on [page 52](#) of this edition.

14. The detail that the Oannes creatures did not eat while on land is interesting, and suggests the possibility that they were intelligent machines, assuming they did not eat in the water either. In other words, though the source describes them as being part human and part fish, they may have been neither.

15. Entry [Dagon](#) from the *Jewish Encyclopaedia* (1906).

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16. Entry "Cecrops" from William Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology* (London, 1850; reprinted several times), volume 1, pp. 657-658. The entry is an attachment to the pdf version of this article.

17. For Persia/Iran, the guardians are fish, not half-human half-fish. Ten *kar* fish who do not eat and are spiritually fed, protect early creation. For a discussion see S. N. Kanga's article in the *Spiegel Memorial Volume* (Bombay, 1908), pp. 1-11. The article is attached to the pdf version of this article: "The Homa Tree and the Ten Kar-fish of the Bundahishn and the Trees of Knowledge and Life and the Serpent of the Bible: A Comparison." For India, [Brahma](#) and [Vishnu/Matsya](#) (from Wikipedia); for China: [Fuxi](#) (from Wikipedia).

18. Eusebius' *Chronicle*, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

19. Stephanie Dalley, *Myths from Mesopotamia*, Creation, the Flood, Gilgamesh, and others (Oxford, 1989), paperback 1991 (the edition cited in this essay), *Introduction*, pp. xv-xix and *passim*. This is an excellent and accessible translation of some important Middle Eastern myths with scholarly notes and bibliography by S. Dalley, a renowned archaeologist and cuneiformist. Dalley explains how aspects of Sumerian culture, including mythology, were adopted by other later peoples such as the Hittites, Babylonians, and Assyrians. The myths about Creation and the Flood are generally the same, with local place names, mountains, rivers, etc. substituted in the different versions, though there are important variations. All the myths in Dalley's book were translated from the Akkadian language. For our purposes, the variations in the different versions are not crucial, since all the versions contain the same information about the specific points we raise here. For Dalley's discussion of the differences in the myths of Creation and the Flood in Mesopotamia, the Bible, and the Greek world, see *op. cit.*, pp. 4-8.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-28, 286, 288, 298.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 22, 27, 29-30, 110-112.

22. Gilgamesh is described as 2/3 divine and 1/3 mortal, son of a mortal king, Lugalbanda, and a divine mother, Ninsun, *ibid.* pp. 40-41, 51, 96, 99, 107. His comrade, Enkidu, was created from a lump of clay, pp. 52-53. Two other figures who were originally mortals, Utnapishtim/Atrahasis and his wife, were *granted* immortality by the gods as a reward, pp. 116.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 96-97.

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24. *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 14, 228, 261.

25. The gods are mentioned as inhabiting and travelling back and forth in four zones: Heaven, Earth, the Underworld, and a watery deep called the Apsu. Ea, the chief deity and the wisest, resides in the Apsu (*ibid.*, pp. 210, 223). Oannes-type entities appear as the Seven Sages or Seven Craftsmen who were believed to have been responsible for massive or cyclopean building (*ibid.*, pp. 50, 120, 182). At some point the chief deity became displeased with these teachers and banished them to the Apzu (*ibid.*, p. 291). The Seven Sages are sometimes referred to as "holy carp" (*ibid.*, p. 292). Dr. Dalley in the *Glossary* entry for the Seven Sages writes:

"According to cuneiform traditions, known only from indirect references and from Berossus, Ea sent seven divine sages, *apkallu*, in the form of *puradu* fish (carp?) from the Apsu to teach the arts (Sumerian *me*) of civilization to mankind before the Flood. They were: Adapa (U-an, called Oannes by Berossus), U-an-duga, En-me-duga, En-me-galama, En-me-buluga, An-Enlilda, and Utu-abzu. Each is also known by other names or epithets, and is paired with an antediluvian king, hence their collective name 'counsellors', *muntalku*. In this capacity they were credited with building walled cities. Responsible for technical skills, they were also known as 'craftsmen', *ummianu*, a word which puns with Adapa's name U-an. They were banished back to the Apsu forever after angering Ea. After the flood, certain great men of letters and exorcists were accorded sage-status, although only as mortals. Deities other than Ea—Ishtar, Nabu, and Marduk—claimed to control the sages. In iconography sages are shown either as fish-men, or with bird attributes appropriate to Underworld creatures." *ibid.*, pp. 327-328.

In the Mesopotamian myths, the gods seem to comport themselves with the decisions of their assembly. See, for example, the outrage of the gods at Ellil for unilaterally ordering the Flood without consultation (*ibid.*, p. 115). The weapons of the gods consist of natural disasters such as floods, drought and disease (*ibid.*, pp. 18-20). But the gods also possess rays and radiances which serve as weapons and, if lost, can hobble the god who loses them. The "Tablets of Destiny" may also serve as a shield of sorts, since when held against the chest, they will deflect weapons hurled at whoever holds them (*ibid.*, pp. 215, 225, 237, 251, 293). Another weapon is the ability to change people's minds (*ibid.*, 298-299).

A number of intelligent composite creatures appear in the Mesopotamian myths. These include Scorpion-men (*ibid.*, pp. 96, 212, 224), fish-men, bull-men (*ibid.*, 237) shape-shifting *gallu*-demons (212, 224), and others (see the drawings on p. 316). The god Marduk, though not composite, is described as having four eyes, four ears, and five fearsome rays (*ibid.*, p. 236).

26. The half-divine half-human Nephilim are mentioned as being present after the Flood as well (Numbers 13.33). Yahweh also attempts to hobble humanity again *after* the Flood. In Genesis 11.1-9, humans were building a city "and a tower with its top in the heavens." "And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the sons of men had built. And the Lord said, 'Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; and nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down, and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.'" The Bible we use is *The Oxford Annotated Bible*, revised standard version (New York, 1962).

27. Bullard, *op. cit.*, p. 67.